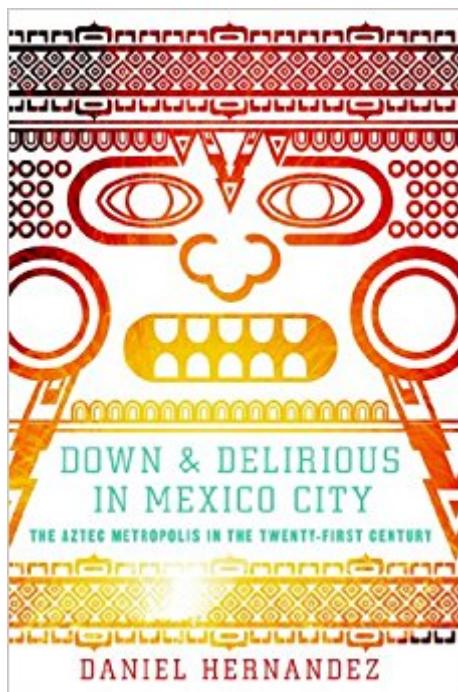


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Down And Delirious In Mexico City: The Aztec Metropolis In The Twenty-First Century



Synopsis

MEXICO CITY, with some 20 million inhabitants, is the largest city in the Western Hemisphere. Enormous growth, raging crime, and tumultuous politics have also made it one of the most feared and misunderstood. Yet in the past decade, the city has become a hot spot for international business, fashion, and art, and a magnet for thrill-seeking expats from around the world. In 2002, Daniel Hernandez traveled to Mexico City, searching for his cultural roots. He encountered a city both chaotic and intoxicating, both underdeveloped and hypermodern. In 2007, after quitting a job, he moved back. With vivid, intimate storytelling, Hernandez visits slums populated by ex-punks; glittering, drug-fueled fashion parties; and pseudo-native rituals catering to new-age Mexicans. He takes readers into the world of youth subcultures, in a city where punk and emo stand for a whole way of life—sometimes lead to rumbles on the streets. Surrounded by volcanoes, earthquake-prone, and shrouded in smog, the city that Hernandez lovingly chronicles is a place of astounding manifestations of danger, desire, humor, and beauty, a surreal landscape of “cosmic violence.” For those who care about one of the most electrifying cities on the planet, “Down & Delirious in Mexico City is essential reading.” (David Lida, author of *First Stop in the New World*).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 2002, just out of U.C. Berkeley, Hernandez headed to Mexico City to trace his cultural roots. Five years later, he returned there as a journalist and immersed himself in the bewildering subcultures of the western hemisphere’s largest city. His explorations take him from fashion runways and

cocaine after-parties, the street brawls of punk and emo kids, to the teeming festival of Mexico's national icon, the Virgin of Guadalupe. As Hernandez wanders the labyrinths of the city, he also investigates his own uncertain identity as the American-born child of Mexican parents. Hernandez covers a lot of ground in his study of the city, maybe too much. Skimming from scene to scene, he doesn't settle anywhere long enough to write with an insider's perspective. Because of this, the observations rarely transcend the journalistic generalities found in the average feature story. Hernandez's personal quest, which could have centered the book, never becomes compelling. While informative, his book often reads like a bulked up tour guide. (Feb.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

As a journalist in Mexico's capital from 2007 to 2010, Hernandez collected experiences and impressions for this collection of essays largely about the city's youth subcultures. Some pieces diverge into discussions of the general features of Mexico City, such as its smog and its plague of kidnapping, but Hernandez, not long out of college, chiefly immersed himself in the haunts and attitudes of 20-year-olds. He fell in with one group on pilgrimage to the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the first of several foci of veneration that Hernandez inspects (Saint Death and sweat lodges are two others). Exploring the street scenes of the massive metropolis, Hernandez in turn befriends music fanatics; "emos" (as in emotional ones); hard-partying, fashion-conscious scenesters; denizens of beer bars; and punks. In their microsociologies, Hernandez observes people's styles of self-expression and muses about their self-identities as quasi-tribal responses, akin to survival modes amid the chaotic city's ever-impinging potential for danger (one friend dies). A perceptive reporter, Hernandez renders a gritty portrait of contemporary Mexican youth. --Gilbert Taylor

If you are not familiar with Daniel Hernandez then you should be! This book is rad, I felt transported at every moment to the time and place he was writing about, all revolving around different scenes in Mexico City. As one who is always daydreaming of traveling, these pages made for a vivid vicarious experience. Check his work with Vice, and his most entertaining and informative Vice Munchies videos. You can also follow him on twitter @longdrivesouth.

awesome book for CDMX background info. its a bit out of day 2007 / 2008 but... relevant background nonetheless. A fun read prior or during your trip. Mr. Hernandez has a great writing style, kept me coming back for more.

I am an American who lives in MÃ©rida, Mexico and I bought this book as I am considering moving to Mexico City. I did not want a guide book, but rather a book that speaks more to cultural issues and what it is like to LIVE in Mexico City. This book delivered. Though it is not particularly deep nor philosophical, I found it to be a good starting point about the city and its people. And for those like me, who want to read more, the author gives some references in the form of blogs, websites and books that he used as secondary materials. The book does tell much about a wealthy person's way of life. The first-person narratives are about the author's interactions with punk rockers, emos, fashionistas, partiers and the like. But it is written by a young man who is just starting out. It reflects his experiences and what he was interested in and had access to, not what you or I might want. The book drags a bit, here and there, and some chapters had me saying, "So what?" but overall I enjoyed it. It takes courage to live and work in another country and to write about it. And to me, that made this an inspiring book. All in all, I feel like I have a much better feel for Mexico City and my next trip there will be greatly enriched by Down and Delirious in Mexico City. I look forward seeing what else this author comes up with in the future.

Prompt delivery of this fine product.

A really great and entertaining book. This isn't a common book. I enjoy it.

Great insight into mexico city culture and still relevant.

"Down and Delirious" is a lush and nuanced account of a multi-layered, fascinating, society. Hernandez writes with a voice that is unique and personable, not to mention, knowledgeable. He makes the material pop with his narrative style. The book is informative, but more importantly, enjoyable. I look forward to more from Daniel Hernandez.

Unfortunately, I did not get the hard edition and instead got the Kindle edition. Otherwise, I would have gotten a pretty cool book cover to look at, in addition to a fascinating book about DF. The author provided a nuanced and modern discussion of the various groups of young people in Mexico City. Inherent in this discussion is the examination struggle that Mexican youth in DF face in figuring out where to fit in and yet maintaining some level of adherence to cultural practices and norms. The best discussion of modern Mexico from a sociological perspective that I've seen of late. Bravo!

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